

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 12-16, 18 and 19 are currently being cancelled.

Claims 11 and 17 are currently being amended. Support for the amendments made to claims 11 and 17 may be found, for example, on page 21, line 11 to page 23, line 27 of the specification, and Figure 5 of the drawings

Claims 20-27 are currently being added.

This amendment adds, cancels and amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After adding, canceling and amending the claims as set forth above, claims 11, 17 and 20-27 are now pending in this application.

Request for Entry of After-final Amendment and Reply:

It is respectfully requested that this After-final Amendment and Reply be considered and entered, since: a) it adds new claims while canceling a commensurate number of pending claims, b) it is believed to place this application in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 11, 13-14, 16-17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,149,977 to Mita in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,483,609 to Ueno and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,658,156 to Aritomi and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0041396 to Ugajin et al.; and claims 12, 15 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination

of Mita, Ueno, Aritomi and Ugajin as applied to claim 11, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,369,873 to Levy et al. These rejections are traversed with respect to presently pending claims 11 and 17, for at least the reasons given below.

The present invention is directed to providing an image quality which satisfies an operator's needs. To achieve this, according to the present invention, pre-scanning is performed at the time of copying, and it is then determined whether or not a sufficient image quality can be obtained with a compression rate set in advance by an operator. Then, if necessary, a warning message is displayed in order for an operator to select a continuing copying mode with the set compression rate, or to select another copying mode with a decreased compression rate.

The present invention is also directed to precisely reflect the user's demand in color copying. To achieve this, when sufficient image quality cannot be obtained with the currently set compression rate, a warning is output so as to allow the operator to change the setting of a compression method and a compression rate.

To achieve the above features, an image forming apparatus includes, among other things:

reading means for reading image data of a variety of colors by scanning an original image from an original;

first selecting means for selecting image forming with respect to an original of low image quality;

first setting means for setting an encoding method suitable for a low compression rate when the forming of the image with the high image quality is selected by the second selecting means;

second setting means for setting an encoding method suitable for a high compression rate, when the distinguishing means distinguishes that the original image is not a highly detailed image and when the second selecting means does not select the forming of the image with the high image quality;

image processing means for reading the original image through re-scanning by the reading means and converting the image data on the various colors respectively to image signals for image forming;

registering means for compressing image signals of different colors supplied from the image processing means with the compression rate and the encoding method set by the first setting means or second setting means, and registering the image signals as compressed image data in a storage portion; and

image forming means for reading the compressed image data registered by the registering means in the storage portion and forming an image in an image-formed medium by an image signal for image forming expanded based on the compression rate and the encoding method set by the first setting means or second setting means.

Turning now to the cited art of record, none of the above-mentioned features recited in claim 11 are taught or suggested by Mita, Ueno, Aritomi, Ugajin et al. and Levy et al., alone or in combination.

Presently pending independent claim 17 is a method claim that recites similar features to those mentioned above with respect to claim 11, and thus claim 17 is also believed to patentably distinguish over the cited art of record.

New Claims:

New claims 20-27 have been added to recite additional features of the present invention that are believed to provide a separate basis of patentability for those claims, beyond the reasons provided above for their respective base claim.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date February 28, 2006

By Phillip J. Articola

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 672-5300
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Pavan K. Agarwal
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 40,888

Phillip J. Articola
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 38,819